





# The Oceanography Report



The Oceanography Report  
The front point for physical, chemical, geological, and biological oceanography.

Associate Editors: Arnold J. Gordon, Lamont-Berkeley Geophysical Observatory, Palisades, New York, 10964 telephone 914/353-2900, ext. 325

## NOAA's Service to Research

John V. Byrne

*Ed. Note: The following text is excerpted from the author's remarks delivered at the AGU Ocean Sciences Meeting, New Orleans, La., January 1984.*

I want to discuss two of the major areas of effort in which NOAA is engaged—service and science. There is a third area, management, where we have responsibilities for managing fisheries, marine and estuarine sanctuaries, and so on. But that is not the focus of my remarks today. I want instead to concentrate on NOAA's primary responsibility, service, and on some areas of NOAA research that make up our service functions.

All scientists know the difficulty of keeping abreast of developments in our own disciplines. But beyond that, there is always the intriguing possibility that we can draw new ideas, methods, or technologies from other disciplines, and apply them to our own research. When we are asked about kinds of research we are being pursued—what the links might be with our own work—we can sometimes solve problems larger, and often more vital, than those we were initially addressing. This type of linkage is particularly important to NOAA because of our responsibility to provide service involving the ocean, the atmosphere, and even space. (We have the responsibility of monitoring solar flares as well as operating remote sensing satellites.)

The architects of our agency must have recognized that the understanding of the ocean, its resources, and its interactions with mankind lay in better understanding of oceanography, meteorology, marine biology, economics, and human behavior—and of the linkages among all of them.

## Service

Among our services to the ocean community, we are proud of those offered by the National Geophysical Data Center in Boulder, Colorado. It has a number of groups that you should find helpful—time for geology and geophysics, and another—under contract with the University of Colorado—for glaciology. They are looking toward some interesting new projects.

One of the projects stems from President Reagan's March 10, 1983 proclamation of a U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). It established U.S. jurisdiction over all resources in and below the ocean out to the 200-mile limit previously established by the Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and opened up great possibilities—ultimately for economic development and more immediate for scientific exploration.

NOAA and the U.S. Geological Survey are jointly planning a cooperative survey of appropriate areas in the EEZ using the Seabeam system on the NOAA ship Surveyor, and perhaps another ship, to come up with the necessary maps. This is truly an interagency and interdisciplinary effort, designed to take full advantage of the possibilities opened up by the President's proclamation. In addition, NOAA will focus on the physical, chemical, and biological aspects of those parts of the ocean. (I should also add that we have two excellent seagoing systems for high-resolution, multibeam swath surveys, and we are working closely with USGS and other interested parties in planning joint use of both of them.)

The Seabeam system is a deep water system. It is used in water depths greater than 100 m, with swath widths of 0.8 times the water depth.

In addition, we have a Bathymetric Sonar Survey System—BS<sup>2</sup>. It is on the NOAA ship, Davidson and is used in shallower waters.

depths of about 10 to 600 m, with a swath width of 2.5 times the water depth. To the best of my knowledge, the BS<sup>2</sup> system is unique.

Scientists from our National Ocean Service are working with USGS scientists to plan multibeam swath surveys of appropriate areas of the EEZ, sharing the funding and cooperating in data processing and devising formats for the data. And their colleagues from our National Geophysical Data Center are also working with the USGS on an implementation plan for distributing the bathymetric information obtained from these cruises.

Of course, we also operate the National Oceanographic Data Center. I know most of you are familiar with it. If you are not well acquainted with its products and services, you'll find an exhibit and some helpful people here at this meeting.

Among NOAA's most important service responsibilities in the oceans are those providing for safe and efficient coast and marine operations. In addition to the many routine services that we offer—nautical charts, tide tables, and the like—we are working toward some new and very unusual products. They'll blend advanced technology and management techniques with traditional data presentation to provide much more up-to-date, and consequently more accurate, operational information in numerous critical areas.

One of these areas is port operations. We live in a high tech world of electronic computers, earth satellites and space shuttles, and communications of astonishing sophistication. But some areas, such as port operations, have remained essentially low tech.

Ships do have radar, and depth finders, it is true. But they are still dependent upon charts that give retrospective rather than actual data, tide tables that give predictive rather than actual data, buoys to see and estimate the speed and direction of other traffic, and so on. Low tech, and sometimes rather inadequate.

We are thinking of some major improvements both in the technical and in the management aspects of harbor operations, aimed at making ports much more efficient places. We call this Project PORTS.

We are beginning with systems to provide real time tide and water level information to ships entering and leaving harbors. To these will be added data on currents, waves, and weather, and possibly ice information in northern latitudes.

We are also considering implementation of electronic display of digital nautical chart information. Chart information can be transmitted via telephone wire, or telemetry, or distributed in cassettes for display on cathode ray tubes aboard ship. Ultimately, perhaps, we will have an entirely electronic bridge, comparable to the instrument display in front of an airline pilot as he flies low to land.

We envision the day when a ship entering a harbor will display the appropriate nautical chart on a CRT screen on the bridge. Real time information on its exact position, channel markers, currents, and other data will also be displayed. The navigator will have a moving image of everything he needs for accurate and safe navigation under any conditions. NOAA will have a role in this, as will the local ports management and the private sector.

Devising such a system would require the talents of chart makers, oceanographers, electronics engineers, managers of ports and harbors, and many others.

We have embarked on another, more immediate program to expand our services to the ocean community, through the establishment of an Ocean Service Center in Seattle. This center integrates the products and services of all NOAA's main components.

It provides one-stop shopping. If you will, for all the information we have, both real-time, such as weather, and retrospective, such as scientific publications, data bases or nautical charts. A major purpose of forming this center is to improve the quality of our products, and speed up their delivery to users.

Seattle was selected for the first center because it is home to the largest number of NOAA employees outside Washington, D.C.—representing all our main components. If the Seattle center works as well as we think it will, it will be the forerunner of others in ports around the Nation.

The kinds of information the Ocean Service Center has available include: Atmospheric and oceanographic warnings, forecasts, and analyses; Nautical charts, tide tables, current information, and the like; Marine environmental quality information; Fish marking statistics; marine advisory services; Information on marine mammals; Status reports on special issues such as port development, ocean outfalls, and Regional Fishery Management Plans; Information on major natural events such as El Niño; Information on major man-made events such as oil spills; Access to NOAA and non-NOAA data bases.

Among other things, the model and data base of the Naval Oceanographic Data Distribution System—which originates from the Fleet Numerical Oceanography Center in

Monterey, California—is now being incorporated in NOAA marine weather forecasts.

NODDS, as it is called, provides a synoptic oceanographic and meteorological information including the present situation and prognostications in ocean areas. Its data sources include hundreds of Navy and other ships, fixed and floating buoys, satellites, and many other platforms.

NOAA took over funding for the commercial and non-Navy uses of NODDS last July 1. It is a great asset to our marine weather forecasting.

We are also in the early stages of developing synoptic global forecasts for the ocean which will be operational and will be disseminated through the ocean service centers.

Our Ocean Service Center will not compete with private industry. This is fundamental to our philosophy and to our way of doing things. We will cooperate with business in identifying products and services that have viable commercial markets, and that the private sector can best exploit. We will cooperate and encourage transfer to the private sector in those cases.

I have mentioned that service is NOAA's number one job, and the Ocean Service Center concept is a major effort to improve our service. We conduct a great deal of research, ranging from very applied to quite basic studies of oceans and atmosphere, but all of it is related to our missions of service. There are a number of areas closely related to your interests.

I notice that your program included a full day session yesterday on El Niño, and another Friday on the Southern Ocean, which I might conjecture bears some relationship to El Niño. NOAA has of course monitored and conducted a great deal of research on that phenomenon—as you might expect, because of what it will tell us about long-range climatic effects. But we have other interests, in quite different fields. Linkages.

We have economists in our Assessment and Information Services Center. They are most interested in the economic effects of El Niño.

And biologists. Let me tell you about their interests.

A year or so ago three groups of NOAA scientists were studying somewhat different problems out on the west coast. Marine meteorologists were tackling a problem posed by the National Weather Service for improving ice forecast models in the Bering Sea. Some physical oceanographers were studying ocean circulation in the area... and some fishery biologists were studying fluctuations in the king crab population there. Their problem: Why had crab production plummeted from 140 million pounds in 1978 to about five million five years later?

Fortunately, the fisheries people looked to the others for help: the results of the three studies turned out to mesh extraordinarily well.

The meteorologists found that the position of the jet stream each year has a profound effect on storm tracks in the Bering Sea—sending them far up north, or along a southerly path, which influences the extent of the ice pack.

The oceanographers found that this wind-driven system also greatly influences ocean circulation.

The fishery biologists knew that king crabs release their eggs at the bottom, and that these float to the top as larvae and then, as juveniles, take about eight years to grow to the size where they enter the fishery. The juveniles feed on the large planktonic bloom that is normally found in the relatively unisothermal warm top layer of the water.

A multidisciplinary team, the three found that when storms hit the area, the water is thoroughly mixed, the normal large crabs have to search much further for food—which increases their exposure to predators. The biologists also think that the colder, more saline water is less conducive to crab growth, but they don't yet know which characteristic, or combination of characteristics, is most important.

Enter El Niño. Through the process known as teleconnection, effects of the southern oscillation that causes El Niño are transmitted to the northern hemisphere, bringing about a strong westerly flow at lower latitudes than normal. The semi-permanent low in the Gulf of Alaska is strengthened, leading to more intense disturbances whose effects are again transmitted to the ocean.

This is, of course, the change in storm paths that influence the extent of the ice pack, as I have mentioned.

The economic implications of this are tremendous. If we can know enough about these fluctuations to model them, we can predict them—far enough in advance, we hope, so that some day we will be able to give the king crab fishermen adequate warning to modify their boats to hunt another species during a season or so. All because, eight or nine years previously, the jet stream didn't follow its normal course. And this of course stimulates further inquiry. The conditions that may cause a decrease in the stock

of king crabs may be just right to cause an increase in other species. What species? If this hypothesis turns out to be true, and if we could find out the species, then we could also advise the fishermen, so they'd know how best to rig their boats.

We do know that last year's Southern Ocean El Niño resulted in movement of many tropical species northward, including yellowtail, bonito, and barramundi.

From February to April of last year, barramundi were caught in Monterey Bay, 400 miles north of San Francisco, and two tropical species—purple catfish and Pacific barramundi—were found farther north than ever before observed.

We are continuing our studies of this problem, trying to take full advantage of all the linkages among various disciplines to address the problem of recruitment, which we are beginning to recognize as critical to the health of fish stocks. It is an area where physical scientists have much to contribute.

With respect to the climatology aspect of El Niño, an international research project—TUGA, for Tropical Ocean Global Atmosphere—is going to take place to explore the dynamics of the great ocean-atmosphere El Niño event. It will be a five-year-long experiment. The International Project Office will be established in NOAA, and field operations are scheduled to begin about January of 1985.

Additional light is being shed on the whole phenomenon of El Niño through work at our Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory. It has developed a coupled ocean-atmosphere model that simulates the amplification of modest initial perturbations during El Niño Southern Oscillation events. The model reproduces the simultaneous growth of perturbations in the atmosphere and ocean.

A new model has also been developed there—in cooperation with the Army's Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory—to study the interaction of sea-ice dynamics and the ocean circulation. It is a coupled ice-ocean model, and was used on the Arctic Ocean-Greenland Sea region, using winds derived from the First Global GARP Experiment to drive it.

Preliminary results allow a comparison between ice position with and without active currents in the ocean models. The effect of currents provides a much more realistic seasonal variation of ice front, as well as a simulation of the salinity gradients near the ice boundary frequently observed in polar oceans.

The growth of polar pack ice is related both to the ambient air temperature and the strength of winds that deform the ice and control the amount of open leads and distribution of ice thickness. This coupled ice-ocean model will be carefully tested with the view of including it in a fully coupled global climate model.

One of GFDL's most important efforts is the study of climate variability by means of these coupled ocean-atmosphere-ice-mathematical models. The lab has recently completed an investigation of the transient response of climate to an increase of atmospheric concentration of CO<sub>2</sub>. When they found that the surface air temperatures over continents rose much more quickly by an increase in CO<sub>2</sub> levels than does the corresponding surface temperature of the oceans, with their huge thermal inertia.

NOAA is studying the oceans in many ways, from modeling to physical oceanography to biology. NOAA scientists are also going to be carrying out investigations of submarine hydrothermal vents, and the geology, biology, and chemistry of the deep-sea. This will follow up previous research on polymetallic sulfides and seafloor spreading. We already mentioned the Seabeam work of Surveyor.

In July of this year, NOAA scientists will visit sites of active hydrothermal venting along the Juan de Fuca ridge in a series of Alvin dives. Geophysical, Geochemical, and biological samples will be taken.

Our Class 1 ship Researcher will do a multidisciplinary cruise to the Mid-Atlantic Ridge in August for bottom dredging, water sampling, and photography.

And we aim to have bathymetric and tectonic maps of the Gorda and Juan de Fuca Ridges available in September. We are attempting to coordinate our activities in this area with the USGS and, through the National Science Foundation, with academic scientists. We are making progress, but not fast enough—for you or for me.

In addition to supporting Alvin dives, we have—as many of you know—on a national undersea research network, operated for us by universities and available to qualified scientists of all disciplines. Of these, HydroLab is located off St. Croix in the Virgin Islands, the "old man of the sea" where habitats are concerned. It has been operational for many years and has proven immensely useful.

It is, incidentally, the only operating habitat system in the free world now used for scientific purposes.

Operated for us by Fairleigh Dickinson University, HydroLab is in 15 meters of water, and supports four scientists divers for a week. They can operate to depths of 50 meters, curing the reef and observing geological and biological processes.

As part of this national network, we also support the two-man submersible Albatross operated by the University of Hawaii and its

able open diving bell system with surface support ship operated by the University of North Carolina.

A temperate water habitat is now under construction, to be operated for us by the University of Southern California. It will house six scientists for up to 30 days, at a maximum depth of 40 meters, with capability for the divers to go down as far as 65 meters.

And a fifth part of this national network is now being developed by the University of Connecticut, in support of undersea activities off the New England coast. The group is currently considering the appropriate kind of facility for the rigorous conditions of that area.

I am sure many of you will be interested in a major workshop on the status of NOAA's undersea activities, which will be held in May at the University of Connecticut facility at Avery Point. It will focus on present and future activities in all disciplines throughout our national undersea network, and we will be inviting major players from about as well as U.S. scientists.

I have adverted to the EEZ a couple of

times in my remarks today, and I want to mention it once more in closing, to tell you of a forthcoming event that I hope you will join me in supporting. It is the Year of the Ocean, which will begin March 10—the anniversary of the EEZ proclamation.

The Year of the Ocean is designed to accomplish three goals—to expand public awareness and knowledge of the importance of the ocean and its resources, to promote a sense of stewardship for them, and to foster a public/private partnership for wise use and management of ocean resources.

It is being run by a nonprofit Foundation created especially for the purpose, and is being funded by donations from industry and other interested groups.

You will be hearing a great deal more about the Year of the Ocean in forthcoming weeks, as programs are put together at both national and local levels. I look forward to your active participation.

## News & Announcements

### AGU Ocean Sciences Award: Feenan D. Jennings

The Ocean Sciences Section of the AGU recognizes Feenan D. Jennings' 25 years of excellent service and successful leadership in the ocean sciences community. He earned the B.S. degree at New Mexico State University (1950) and pursued graduate studies at Scripps and the University of California at Los Angeles. Feenan's career in marine research management began when he left his position as Ocean Engineer in 1958 to become Head Oceanographer of the Geophysics Branch of ONR, a position he held until 1966. During his career with ONR, one of his additional duties was equipment maintenance for back research funds earmarked for oceanographic work.

This important function involved monitoring, reporting and helping to defend the expenditure of all oceanographic basic research funds sent by the Navy. He was also instrumental in formulating and carrying through a five-year ship plan which resulted in the construction of most of the large oceanographic vessels now used by the U.S. academic community.

He became Deputy Director of ONR's Ocean Science and Technology Division (1966-1970) and then joined NSF as Head of the Office for the International Decade of Ocean Exploration, a position he held until 1978. IDOE was a new approach to multidisciplinary, sometimes multidisciplinary, research, and it required skill, tact, patience, and considerable force to carry it through.

Feenan's work as Head of IDOE was both arduous and superb. Under his leadership, the IDOE broadened its original scientific scope to include support for projects dealing with Living Resources. While at NSF, Feenan served for one year (1975-1976) as Acting Director of the Division of Ocean Sciences in addition to his IDOE post.

In 1978, he became Director of the Texas A&M University Sea Grant College Program, one of the largest in the nation. Since 1982, he has also served as Executive Director of the Texas A&M Office of University Research Services. The Sea Grant Association elected him its President for 1981. In that capacity, Feenan provided much needed leadership in presenting and defending the national Sea Grant budget to various elements in Washington.

He has served as a member or chairman of numerous national and international committees concerned with the planning and review of marine research, including the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (1970-1978), the U.S. Secretariat for US-USSR Agreement on Cooperation in World Ocean Studies (1973-1978), and the Blue Ribbon Committee of the Marine Technology Society (MTS). In 1981, he was named chairman of two committees of the National Academy of Sciences, one on Coastal Floods from Hurricanes and the other on the DOE Regional Oceanography Review Panel. In 1983, he was appointed to the Texas Coastal and Marine Council by Governor Mark White.

Among his numerous awards and honors are the MTS Meritorious Service Award, designation as an MTS Fellow, the NSF Distinguished Service Award, Navy Meritorious Civilian Award, Navy Superior Service Award, and the Military Oceanography Award (from the Oceanographer of the Navy).

In summary, Feenan Jennings is recognized as the "Paul Bunyan" of oceanographic research management. He had the foresight to break new ground, the integrity to seek quality in the research programs he sponsored, the wisdom to respond to the scientific community's needs and initiatives, the leader-

ship to guide and support his program managers, and the requisite patience to deal with the whims of principal investigators. For all of this, Feenan, accept our thanks.

For the Ocean Sciences Section:

Christopher N. K. Moores  
President  
Joseph L. Reil  
President-Elect  
Peter G. Brewer  
Secretary  
January 25, 1984

### California Coastal Study

Under a contract recently awarded Raytheon Service Company by Minerals Management Services (MMS), the California Coastal Current system will be investigated over a 90 month period involving 18 months of field effort.

The study, under the guidance of Sig Larson, MMS COR, located in the Los Angeles POCS, is to gather a comprehensive data base aimed at describing the mesoscale dynamics in the nearshore regions (to about 50 km offshore) where oil production and transport are most active for the near future. MMS is most anxious that the study be coordinated with any other studies of the region that will take place concurrently with the MMS program. The design of the survey has been used in the historical studies, particularly CALCOFI (California Cooperative Oceanic Fisheries Investigations), to enhance the understanding of variability within the scale of the features observed.

The study encompasses a region extending about 50 km offshore, reaching from Point Conception to San Francisco. The field effort is more concentrated in the southern portion, between Point Conception and Point Pinos, along a grid of hydro lines at 10 km intervals will have conductivity, temperature, and depth (CTD) stations at 20 km spacing with expendable bathythermograph traces (XBT's) at the midpoints to detail the mesoscale structure of the shelf waters. North of Bucon, the CTD spacing will continue at 20 km, and lines will coincide with historical CALCOFI lines. Surveys are scheduled for January, July, and October 1984 and January 1985. The intense sampling in the southern portion will be repeated twice in an 8 day period, providing two "snapshots" of a region where the changes in flow structure appear to be caused by a number of dynamic events superposed on an equatorward mean flow that varies seasonally.

Historically, studies have examined some parts of the region for description of the flow and the dynamic processes. B. M. Hickey (The California Current system: Hypothesis and facts, *Prog. Oceanogr.*, 8, 191-270, 1973) has summarized these. Recent studies reported by C. N. R. Moores [Initial results of the Optima experiments, paper presented at the EDOE Conference, Lake Arrowhead, Calif., 1983] have described eddy structure with interfacial geostrophic "jets." Lagrangian tracers, in studies reported by R. Davis [Results of drogue tracking during cruise experiments, paper presented at CALCOFI conference, Lihulike, Calif., 1983], have seemingly been caught in very high speed (greater than 1 knot) offshore surface flows described as "squirts." The name fits the high speed, narrow, limited extent (200 km) and duration (2 days) of the features as observed by the drogue experiments. Larger scale, more permanent, nearshore, high-speed currents are a regular feature of the region epitomized by the well known Davidson Current appearing in the winter months as a poleward flowing surface feature.

Eleven mooring locations (with vector averaging current meters in the near surface levels, Aanderaa meters below the near surface wave activity, and bottom pressure sensors at five moorings) will be located through the area on lines coincident with hydro survey lines. Eighteen moorings will provide observation of speed/direction, temperature, and conductivity that can be interpreted in conjunction with the hydrographic cross-sectional profiles.

Lagrangian surface drifting devices will be released during each hydro survey in two modes: (1) on three standard lines along hydro-survey lines as a complement to the hydro and moored instrument data and (2) seeded in specific features that are identified from satellite imagery. Satellite imagery and 1° gridded sea surface temperatures will be acquired daily on a regular and continuing basis during the 18 month field program for the overview analysis of the surface dynamics. During tracking studies, the imagery will be analyzed in near real time to furnish direction to the seeding and tracking aircraft.

With luck, the data from the hydrographic survey, the moored instruments, and the tracking efforts will combine to provide a detailed description, in space and time of the dynamic events in the intensively measured region. Additional data to be acquired as part of the study will include hourly winds, temperature, pressure, relative humidity, and diurnal wave spectra from the NDBC buoys (furnished by Global Weather Dynamics, Inc., Monterey, Calif.); hourly winds, temperature, and pressure from nearly 20 near-coastal weather reporting stations (from Global Weather Dynamics, Inc., Monterey, Calif.);

synoptic reports including shore-based stations and ships of opportunity; calculated winds, wind stress, wind stress curl, Ekman drift, meridional transport on a 1° grid, derived from surface pressure distribution the calculations follow the technique of Bakun (furnished by Global Weather Dynamics, Inc., Monterey, Calif.); water level data from National Ocean Survey station locations from Oregon to the Mexican border; and historical and current CALCOFI data for the along-shore region including Santa Barbara Channel to San Francisco and offshore to the limit of the survey lines (furnished by National Marine Fisheries Service, Ronald Lynn.)

Close coordination between this program and the CALCOFI program has been assured by exchange of information on survey design and schedules. This is a CALCOFI year, and a major effort involving some seven surveys between January and September will establish the large-scale structure. Overlap of the two programs occurs in the nearshore region. Further, increased effort by the CALCOFI vessel, *Jordan*, in the MMS area of interest during the March survey will fill the gap in the MMS survey schedule creating a uniform seasonal sampling pattern. Two or three of the nearshore CALCOFI stations on a number of lines will be occupied by both parties promising comparability of the two data sets. The two programs take place in a time when the El Niño conditions may be in a declining state; thus the opportunity to capture the transition and, through comparison of the observed state to historically observed conditions, gain an exciting insight into the nature of changes induced by the El Niño, makes this cooperation doubly rewarding.

Efforts to coordinate the study with other studies or programs in the region or in bordering regions have thus far resulted in an exchange of data and results with the OPCS and Santa Barbara Channel program. For the Santa Barbara Channel program the availability of imagery will be a benefit in operations and planning. Other investigators planning operations in the region during 1984-1985 are encouraged to contact the program management at Raytheon in Ventura to explore the benefits that may derive from a liaison. Data will, of course, be available through the National Ocean Data Center as quickly as it can be processed to meet their delivery requirements; but early access may be beneficial to investigations aimed at explicit short-term forecasts.

The program manager is Robert J. Tall, Raytheon Service Company, 3125 Ralston Street, Ventura, CA 93003, telephone (805) 656-2500.

This news item was contributed by Noel B. Mitchell and Jeff Seaworth, Raytheon Service Company, Ventura, CA 93003.

## The June Bacon-Bercey Scholarship in Atmospheric Sciences for Women 1984-1985

Expressly for women intending to make a career in the atmospheric sciences. This monetary assistance, provided through a gift from June Bacon-Bercey, a noted meteorologist, will be given to a woman who shows academic achievement and promise. To qualify, candidates must be one of the following:

- a first-year graduate student in an advanced degree program in atmospheric sciences;
- an undergraduate in a bachelor's degree program in atmospheric sciences who has been accepted for graduate study;
- a student at a 2-year institution offering at least six semester hours of atmospheric sciences, who has been accepted for a bachelor's degree program, and who has completed all of the courses in atmospheric science offered at the 2-year institution.

Award selection will be made by the AGU Education and Human Resources Committee in consultation with the AGU Atmospheric Sciences Section.

For application forms contact:  
American Geophysical Union  
Member Programs Division  
2000 Florida Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20009  
(202) 462-6903

Application Deadline  
May 1, 1984



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**2000 Florida Ave., N.W.**  
**Washington, DC 20009**  
**Attn: Marketing Dept.**  
**(800) 424-2488**



